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**SENATE HEALTH COMMITTEE TO VOTE ON HEALTHY TEENS ACT
Teens, Parents, Educators Want Resources for Real Sex Education in New York**

Albany, NY (May 22, 2006)—The New York State **Senate Health Committee** will take a crucial vote to advance the health of New York's young people on **Tuesday, May 23**, at 10:30 am. The Committee will consider the **Healthy Teens Act** (A.6619c/S.5121c), which would provide resources to fund age-appropriate, medically accurate sex education for youth. The bill, which has wide bi-partisan support across the state, passed the Assembly on April 3 by a vote of 127-15.

New York has some of the highest rates of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections in the nation. New research shows that the vast majority of New Yorkers support comprehensive sex education and the Healthy Teens Act. The legislation is also supported by a coalition of more than 120 organizations statewide.

The Healthy Teens Act would enable school districts, school-based health centers, BOCES and qualified community organizations to apply for grants to develop and implement programs that provide students with real sex education. Schools would be able to develop curricula that best suit their students' needs and:

- encourage family communication
- promote self-esteem and teach the skills needed to make responsible decisions about sex
- stress the value of abstinence while not ignoring those who have had sex
- provide medically accurate information about sexually transmitted infection and pregnancy prevention including information about contraceptives.

The Healthy Teens Act is sponsored by Assemblymember Richard N. Gottfried (Manhattan) and Senator Nick Spano (Westchester).

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